

KEY POINTS IN HAWAIIAN HISTORY

A timeline of events that led to the dispossession of Hawai'i's native people, and the establishment of the Kamehameha Schools to improve the capability and well-being of Hawaiians through education.

- 0-1778** Polynesians settle Hawai'i (0-500 AD). A vibrant, sustainable Hawaiian society evolves from its ancestral roots. Hawaiian fishponds, agricultural systems, complex governing mechanisms, featherwork, hula, and a host of other Hawaiian innovations emerge.
- 1778** British naval Captain James Cook encounters Hawai'i. The Native Hawaiian population is estimated at the time to be between 400,000 and 800,000. European and U.S. ships arrive following Cook's "discovery." Hawaiians are exposed to foreign diseases and succumb to these by the tens of thousands through the next century.
- 1810** Kamehameha I politically unifies Hawai'i, establishing the Hawaiian Kingdom.
- 1820** American Protestant missionaries arrive. Western education and commerce assume growing importance.
- 1831** Bernice Pauahi Bishop, great-granddaughter of Kamehameha I, is born.
- 1840** Kamehameha III, the Council of Chiefs, and key Western advisors collaborate on the first constitution, codifying in written form citizens' rights and establishing a process by which Hawaiian Kingdom laws are adopted.
- 1843** France and Britain issue a joint declaration formally recognizing the Hawaiian Kingdom as an independent sovereign nation.
- 1848** The Māhele begins to transform the Hawaiian land tenure system to a Western one based on private property ownership. Pauahi's family members receive title to large tracts of land. Pauahi will inherit over 375,000 acres of these lands from various ali'i. Private land ownership paves the way for lucrative sugar plantations operated by businessmen of American and European descent.
- 1850** The U.S. and the Hawaiian Kingdom enter into the Hawaiian-American Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation of 1849, committing the nations to peaceful political and economic interaction.
- 1873** Hawai'i's first elected king, William Lunalilo, reigns for one year before his untimely death. He establishes the first of the Ali'i Trusts. His trust is dedicated to caring for Hawaiian elderly.
- 1875** The U.S. and the Kingdom of Hawai'i ratify a reciprocity treaty, allowing for duty-free entry of Hawai'i sugar to the U.S. As a result, the sugar industry enjoys phenomenal profits and expands at an exponential rate.
- 1883** Pauahi writes her Last Will and Testament, leaving her estate to establish Kamehameha Schools.
- 1884** Pauahi succumbs to cancer and dies on October 16, 1884.
- 1887** Sugar business interests assert the passage of a new constitution. Though it is never lawfully ratified, the sugar interests in the Hawaiian government apply this constitution to limit Native Hawaiian voting rights and the powers of the king. This facilitates the passage of a new treaty with the U.S. that offers the U.S. exclusive use of Pearl Harbor in exchange for continued duty-free entry of sugar from Hawai'i to the U.S.

The Kamehameha School for Boys opens. The first Board of Trustees adopts a policy of giving preference to applicants of Native Hawaiian ancestry.
- 1890** New U.S. legislation ends the competitive advantages that earlier treaties afforded the Hawai'i sugar industry, dealing the sugar businessmen in Hawai'i a devastating blow. They start planning for the annexation of Hawai'i to the U.S. as a permanent solution to ensure their continued profits.

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- 1893** Responding to requests from her people, Queen Lili'uokalani prepares a new constitution to restore voting rights to Native Hawaiians and naturalized citizens and to reinstate the former authorities of the ruling monarch.
- Sugar business interests initiate their plan, orchestrated with U.S. Minister John Stevens, to have Hawai'i annexed to the U.S. In violation of established Hawaiian-American treaties, Stevens orders that U.S. marines land and station themselves adjacent to the main Hawaiian government building. With this shield, the annexationists proclaim that the Hawaiian Kingdom is ended and that a Provisional Government is established until annexation with the U.S. occurs. Stevens declares the Provisional Government as the legitimate government.
- To avoid armed conflict with the U.S. marines under Stevens' authority, Lili'uokalani, under protest, conditionally yields her sovereign authority to the U.S. until the U.S. completes an investigation of its agents' involvement and undoes the actions of those agents.
- President Cleveland withdraws the annexation treaty from Congress. U.S. Special Commissioner James Blount is sent to Hawai'i to investigate and finds that U.S. representatives were responsible for the overthrow. President Cleveland refers to the United States' involvement as "an act of war" and requests Congress to support the reinstatement of the Hawaiian Kingdom.
- 1894** Members of the Provisional Government realize annexation will not occur under President Cleveland. They rename themselves the "Republic of Hawai'i" and wait for the political tide to turn.
- The Kamehameha School for Girls opens.
- 1896** The Republic of Hawai'i legislates that English be the medium of instruction in public and private schools, severely restricting the continuity of Hawaiian as the most common mode of communication.
- 1897** Proponents of annexation forward a new annexation treaty to President McKinley. Representatives from Hawaiian patriotic leagues travel to Washington D.C. and present two related anti-annexation petitions with a total of 38,000 signatures. The annexation treaty fails.
- 1898** The Spanish American War begins. Hawai'i is seen as an essential acquisition for U.S. military purposes. Annexationists attempt to have Hawai'i annexed via a joint resolution, a form of legislation that affects only internal U.S. matters. The joint resolution passes with a simple majority vote instead of the two-thirds required to pass a treaty. The U.S. proceeds with an annexation ceremony on August 12. On August 13, the U.S. military occupies Hawai'i to prepare for its engagement in the Philippines. The Republic of Hawai'i cedes to the U.S. 1.8 million acres of Hawaiian Kingdom government lands and crown lands (lands of the ruling monarch).
- 1920** The Native Hawaiian population is estimated at 41,750 out of 255,900 total Hawai'i residents.
- 1921** Affirming a special relationship between the U.S. and Native Hawaiians, the U.S. enacts the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920. It reserves for Native Hawaiian homesteading over 180,000 acres of the ceded Hawaiian Kingdom crown and government lands that were deemed unusable for growing sugar.
- 1959** Hawai'i becomes a state. Reaffirming the U.S. trust obligation to Native Hawaiians, the U.S. cedes to the State of Hawai'i 1.4 million acres of Hawaiian Kingdom crown and government lands, requiring that it be used for five purposes, including "the betterment of the conditions of Native Hawaiians."
- 1978** Hawaiian leaders organize in the Hawai'i State Constitutional Convention to have the State honor its obligation to use some of its ceded lands revenues to improve the condition of Native Hawaiians, which ultimately establishes the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.
- 1993** The U.S. enacts Public Law 103-150 apologizing for the U.S. role in the overthrow and the "suppression of the inherent sovereignty of the Native Hawaiian people."

1893	1898	1921	1959
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